

*Trans-Canada Highway*

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Keays:** I have been on an historic trip from the horse and buggy days to the day of the motor vehicle. I should like to ask the hon. member if he believes that the construction of pedestrian paths or sidewalks alongside the trans-Canada highway would be a retrograde measure? It seems to me that this was the inference he left. Does he consider that the safety of people, the safety of children, is a retrograde measure?

**Mr. Stewart:** I am glad to answer that question. If we are going to have a trans-Canada highway which is an arterial highway then the governments of the provinces, possibly with the assistance of the federal government, should be interested enough in the safety of the people of Canada to provide money for adequate alternative roads and highways to keep children and bicyclists off these arterial highways.

**Mr. H. A. Olson (Medicine Hat):** Mr. Speaker, I join with the hon. member for Gaspé (Mr. Keays) in his desire to have a safe highway for people who may use the highway, but I have to agree with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Stewart) that an arterial highway is no place for people to be walking. I say that because in Alberta we have had some problems with development that has taken place along the edges of the trans-Canada highway since it was built. This development has almost destroyed the purpose for which the trans-Canada highway was built. In other words, if our concept of this highway was correct in the first instance, it was to be a high speed arterial highway along which motor vehicles could travel at near maximum highway speeds without having to slow down for small towns, villages or even cities. At the same time motor vehicles would be able to maintain this speed without endangering the life of anyone.

The notice of motion is somewhat ambiguous in that it calls for these walks or pedestrian paths to be constructed through inhabited areas. Does this mean inhabited areas such as hamlets, villages, towns and so on? Does it include going through the suburbs of certain cities? I know the hon. member for Gaspé suggested that was not what he had in mind because there was some control of pedestrians in those areas through limited access and so on. The hon. member indicated he was more concerned about the somewhat less inhabited or sparsely inhabited areas throughout the countryside.

[The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret).]

● (6:40 p.m.)

I cannot agree that there should be any provision for pedestrian traffic alongside a high speed highway. The Trans-Canada Highway Act probably should have contained a provision that all other traffic, whether inter-city motor vehicle traffic or pedestrian traffic, should be completely removed from the trans-Canada highway. You do either one of two things; you either have a high speed arterial highway or you defeat the purpose of such a highway by creating serious hazards to life and limb to those people who are going on and off the highway. So I suggest that there really is not a valid case to be made for constructing pedestrian paths along the side of this highway.

That is one matter, Mr. Speaker. There is another great problem which also relates to amending the Trans-Canada Highway Act. Once the initial grant was made the federal government completely withdrew from any further participation in construction of the trans-Canada highway. The reason I say this is that, as the parliamentary secretary said, the completion date of the trans-Canada highway has been pushed forward. The percentage of federal participation has increased in many areas with the pushing forward of the completion date. The hon. member also suggested that the nature of the traffic using this highway is changing and therefore that would justify making some changes in the former arrangement.

This may apply to some provinces but it certainly has not applied to Alberta. Nor does it apply to any other province which has completed its section of the trans-Canada highway. Therefore I believe this suggestion is a fallacy. The original concept of the trans-Canada highway was to construct at least one major high speed arterial highway from one coast of Canada to the other. Surely we, as the federal parliament of the country, cannot now accept that specifications laid down in 1949, 1950, or whenever it was, are adequate for traffic needs in 1966.

One case in point is the inadequacy of the trans-Canada highway between Calgary and Banff. It was built as a two lane highway. Traffic has increased to such an extent that that 80-mile section now requires four lanes of traffic for the safety of the people using it.

Surely it is almost rank discrimination for the federal government to withdraw from the responsibility of maintaining a modern highway from one coast to the other in keeping